

Tooheys

quenching thirst with less water



Top: In just two years Tooheys has cut its water consumption by 20 percent!

Tooheys, part of the Lion Nathan Australia Group, is one of Australia's largest and best-known brewers, having been in continuous operation since the Tooheys brothers established the company in 1868. For most of its history, the company operated out of the famous Standard Brewery in Elizabeth Street, Sydney before moving to Lidcombe in 1973.

Brewing beer is a thirsty process. The Tooheys brewery is the sixth largest water-using business in Sydney, using 3.5 million litres daily – more water than all the homes in Lidcombe.

Tooheys has a long-standing commitment to water conservation and is a member of the Every Drop Counts Business Program. In just two years, the company has cut its water consumption by 20 per cent, reducing the water used to make each litre of beer from 4.9 litres to 4 litres. Tooheys' achievements were recently recognised by Sydney Water with an Every Drop Counts Business Achievement Award for outstanding performance.

Tooheys' success is the result of strategically targeted capital investment, ongoing productivity improvements and significantly, a plant-wide employee communication program to raise awareness of the importance of saving water.

Tooheys' water saving success story began in earnest in 1994 with a review of its utilities costs. The review prompted the company to take action and within four years it managed to dramatically reduce its energy and water consumption.

Over the next five years beer production at the plant became more complex, placing pressure on water conservation performance. For example, the plant now processes 15 bottle types, compared to just three a decade ago.

"We have also achieved impressive reductions by replacing some key plant," Tooheys Operations Director Julian Scott said.

The replacement of several pasteurisers, which ensure product quality and purity and use large quantities of water, has delivered a drop in water consumption of more than 20,000 litres per hour.

Smart human intervention has played its part in reducing water usage. Engineering Services Team Leader Cliff Stockley and a small group of staff initiated a monitoring process on weekends when much of the plant was closed down.

"We spread out through the plant, monitoring various meters and communicating real-time readings using 2-way radios," Mr Stockley said.

"This exercise enabled us to identify a range of issues that has resulted in further cuts in consumption."



Other initiatives that have led to water savings include:

- Repairing the feed valve for the central water tower, which was causing internal overflow.
- Installing glycol chilling and electric defrosting in beer cooling rooms saving 75,000 litres of water daily.
- Shutting down the weekend operation of the water de-aerating process.
- Eliminating wasteful cleaning and rinsing practice through small changes including 'watch dog' timers on line and tank flushes.

"To cut water consumption over the long term, we are now focusing more on the people and the culture," Mr Scott said. Sydney Water assisted Tooheys with its latest cultural change initiative to develop a display to showcase achievements in water savings at the Lidcombe site and encourage staff to adopt further water saving measures at work and home.

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On-site, staff are encouraged to reuse water, monitor work areas, report leaks and use a broom to clean dry spills (rather than a hose). Staff are also encouraged to share ideas about how to use water more efficiently.

Tooheys has now cut its water consumption by 1.3 million litres a day in just two years.

Mr Scott said that three quarters of these savings were due to people initiatives.

"We intend to build on this people-driven strategy and are working with Sydney Water to commence a plant-wide audit of our water use in 2005, to further fine tune our conservation performance," Mr Scott said.

Far left: The production line – the Lidcome plant now processes 15 bottle types. Production is more complex but water use has decreased.

Centre: Celebrating success! (L-R) Toohey's Operations Director, Julian Scott, Sydney Water's Steven Meleca and Toohey's Team Manager Engineering Services, Cliff Stockley.

Above: Operator Konstan Maragiannis at the display developed by Tooheys and Sydney Water to encourage staff to adopt further water saving measures at home and at work.

